

Film Monthly's

REVIEWS



DAVID QUINLAN reports on the movie which turns PATRICK SWAYZE into a ghost!

● PATRICK SWAYZE'S new film *Ghost* has proved the surprise hit of the summer in America, and looks set for huge grosses to follow the surprise hit of the spring there, *Pretty Woman*. It's all the more amazing since *Ghost* isn't nearly as good a movie, even though it has a performance by Whoopi Goldberg that could well revive her sagging career.

"My character Oda Mae Brown," says Whoopi, "has been making a bizarre living as a psychic when she comes into the plot. In reality, she's a scam artist who's been arrested many times. When the hero of the story comes to her as a ghost, it freaks her out."

"But remarkably, he needs her help. There's part of me that's always wanted to be a hero, and Oda Mae permits me to play someone who becomes truly heroic in the final reckoning."

Writer Bruce Joel Rubin says that he was "intrigued by the idea of capturing the sensations and emotions of a person who suddenly comes to realise that he has passed

from life into an immaterial world – a whole new universe."

For star Patrick Swayze, reacting to special effects and playing a character no-one else can see, *Ghost* was simply "the most intense role I've ever played." Swayze's love scenes with Demi Moore are said to have driven Demi's husband Bruce Willis' temperature higher than this year's August heatwave. That should do the film's box-office prospects no harm either.

VERDICT

● It's hard to imagine virile, very-much-alive Patrick Swayze as a ghost. But that's what he becomes when shot by a mugger while walking home with lover Demi Moore. Swayze can't figure why he's been left to roam the earth, but it doesn't take him too long to work out that he's there for a purpose, and that is to protect Demi from those who had his killing rigged to look like a casual hit-and-run affair.

This part isn't too easy (as Demi can't see or hear him, and he can't move objects) until he latches on to a psychic (Whoopi Goldberg) and takes lessons from a bad-tempered subway ghost, brilliantly played by Vincent Schiavelli. Goldberg isn't enthusiastic: "Why don't you get some chains and find a house to haunt?" she complains. But Swayze makes himself nuisance enough to force her hand.

Now all this could have made a first-rate and delightfully offbeat romantic thriller (which it occasionally is). For the reason



that *Ghost* is only effective in fits and starts, look no further than the running time, far too much of which is spent on dopey, protracted, pseudo-erotic moonings before and after ghosthood.

Enjoy the thriller plot then (though the villain isn't difficult to spot), the special effects, Goldberg's always lively presence, and wish that director Jerry Zucker had taken a lighter, crisper hand with the rest.

Producer
LISA WEINSTEIN

Director
JERRY ZUCKER

Screenplay
BRUCE JOEL RUBIN

Photography
ADAM GREENBERG

Music
MAURICE JARRE

127 Minutes – Certificate 15
(UIP-PARAMOUNT)

Sam Wheat	....	PATRICK SWAYZE
Molly Jensen	....	DEMI MOORE
Oda Mae Brown	....	WHOOPI GOLDBERG
Carl Brunner	....	TONY GOLDWYN
Willie Lopez	....	RICK AVILES
Louise	....	GAIL BOGGS
Clara	....	ARMELIA McQUEEN
Subway Ghost	....	VINCENT SCHIAVELLI

RATINGS **PERFORMANCES** 7 **DIRECTION** 5
SCRIPT 7 **PRODUCTION** 7 **ENTERTAINMENT VALUE** 6

FILM